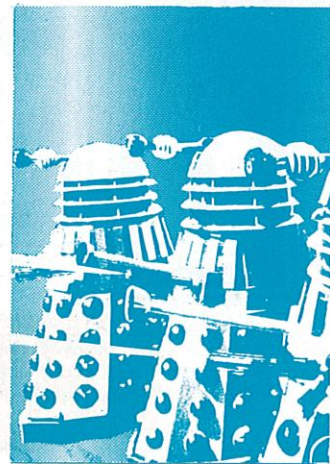


LATE ISSUE

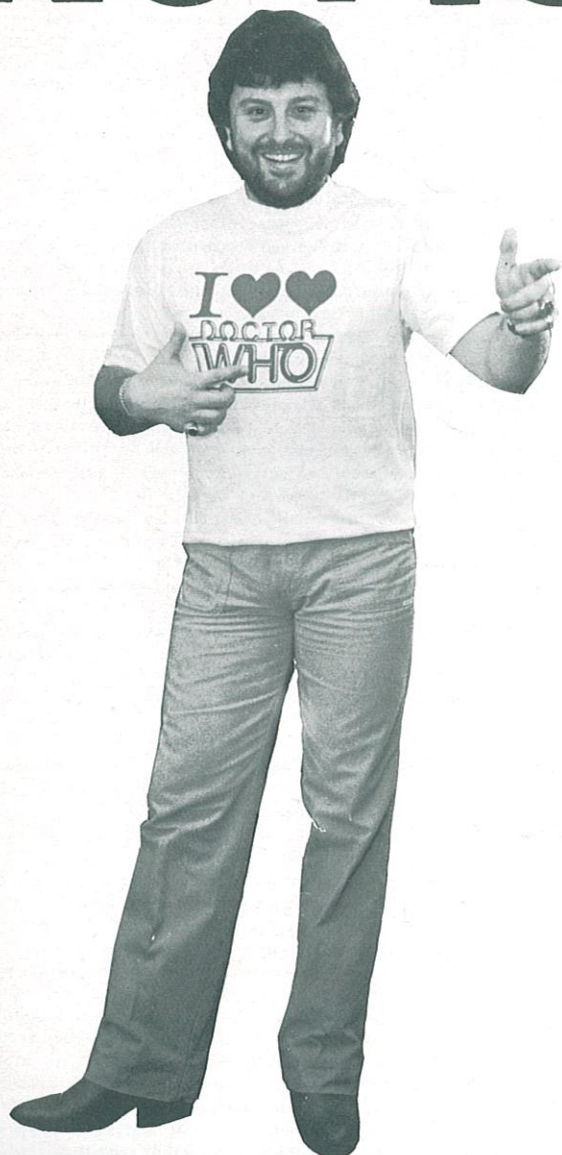


52 MARCH '88



'We are at the dawning of a new age - an age of peace and prosperity' (the Doctor, 1881)

NO MORE JN~T!



NEW PRODUCER FOR SEASON 26

JOHN NATHAN-TURNER IS LEAVING 'DOCTOR WHO' AT THE END OF NEXT SEASON - AND THAT'S OFFICIAL !

Furthermore DOCTOR WHO will be continuing on to its 26th Season and the new Head of Drama Series and Serials, Mark Shivas, will appoint the 10th producer of DOCTOR WHO before the end of the year (probably in the spring to enable him to trail the last couple of stories).

Nathan-Turner's official statement to friends about his departure is that he is moving on to "another project" (see movie news inside), but it is strongly rumoured that BBC1 Controller Jonathan Powell has finally succumbed to public pressure and sacked him - only 4 months after D.W.B. launched Operation WHO; our campaign for better standards in DOCTOR WHO. The news also comes just weeks after Mark Shivas took over as Head of Drama from Powell, and so it seems likely that he played a major part in the affair.

John Nathan-Turner is planning a somewhat self-indulgent swansong and has enlisted the services of many of his friends on the production side of his final story, including ex-WHO secretary Sarah Lee as assistant floor manager, Gary Downie as production manager and Jane Wells as director's assistant.

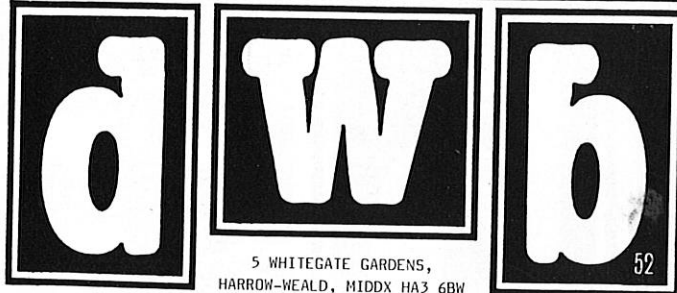
Meanwhile BBC Enterprises have been busy assuring associated merchandise manufacturers that DOCTOR WHO will run for "at least two more series and Sylvester McCoy has already been contracted to play the Doctor up to the end of Season 26.

Since the main objective of Operation WHO has been reached - i.e.: the appointment of a new producer (albeit a season later than hoped for) - the campaign can, thankfully, be laid to rest, but we still recommend that you write to the new Head of Drama Series and Serials suggesting ways in which you think the series could be improved and who you think would be best suited to reviving and thus restoring the credibility of DOCTOR WHO in the eyes of the general public. Send your polite and preferably typed letter to:

Mr. Mark Shivas,
Head of Drama Series and Serials,
BBC TV Centre,
Wood Lane,
LONDON W12 7RJ.

Having produced the award-winning The Six Wives of Henry VIIIth for the BBC a few years ago, Mr. Shivas clearly knows how to achieve excellence in television and so it is reassuring to know that DOCTOR WHO's future now rests in his hands...

DALEKS, CYBERMEN AND THE MASTER LINE UP FOR SEASON TWENTY-FIVE; P4



NO MORE JN-T !

Cover

The headline that many thought would never come ! (The quote at the top of the story was said by the Doctor at the end of THE GUNFIGHTERS and again at the beginning of THE SAVAGES).

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We chat to the original Production Unit Manager of DOCTOR WHO and discover how he almost became producer back in 1979...

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Don't forget to put pen to paper and take part in our latest readership survey...

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: 'ASH', Jeremy Bentham, Robert Cope, George Gallaccio, Anthony Howe, Ian Levine.

D.W.B. AD RATES (Fan): 1 page(A4 camera ready)£33, ½ page (130 x 390mm / 270 x 195mm)£16 50, ¼ page(130 x 195mm / 65 x 390mm)£9 25, Eighth page(65 x 195mm / 130 x 95mm)£5 75, Sixteenth page(65 x 95mm)£3.

(Commercial): 1 page; £38, ½ page; £20 50, ¼ page; £12, Eighth page; £7 50, Sixteenth page; £4.

*Adverts must comply to the exact dimensions listed above

*All ads must be in black ink and typed

*Ads in breach of copyright or of an offensive nature will be returned

IMPORTANT NOTICE: The special issue billed for next month will be delayed until May. Therefore next issue will be a standard 16 page issue out in three weeks time including these items: An exclusive interview with Tom Baker; reviews of Tom Baker and Colin Baker's latest plays with photos; exciting news of a new discovery of off-screen stills from a missing story; plus the first part of a major feature on DOCTOR WHO ratings with actual viewing figures made available for the very first time! Next issue the ratings of the William Hartnell years...

To order next issue, send a crossed cheque/PO payable to D.W.B. for £1 30 to: D.W.B.#53, 5 Whitegate Gardens, Harrow-Weald, Middlesex HA3 6BW. To subscribe from next issue up to the Winter Special send a crossed cheque/PO for £15 40 and a SAE to the same address.

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Under Attack

The Right of Reply

As a topical news-'zine, D.W.B. expects a fair amount of criticism over our sometimes provocative and outspoken views, because thank goodness not everyone agrees with them and so it normally encourages constructive feedback and healthy debate. Lately, however, D.W.B. has been the target for a number of unconstructive attacks, not from readers but from other well-known publications, and we feel we cannot let them pass without comment.

In the final issue of CMS's acclaimed Space & Time series, of all places, editor Stephen James Walker saw fit to comment in his farewell piece: "...Tim(Robins)'s objection of principle to the links which seemed to him to be developing at that time between CMS and The DOCTOR WHO Bulletin - a magazine which he felt represented the very worst and distasteful aspects of DOCTOR WHO Fandom...". Long-term readers (cira D.W.B.#22) will recall that this rift centred around a mindlessly petty, and personal political difference which had no place in a DOCTOR WHO fanzine in the first place and which, we assumed, was long since forgotten. By dredging it up in their final issue, Space & Time has achieved nothing but the soiling of an otherwise flawless reference work which originally set out to document DOCTOR WHO, the series, and certainly not the petty sniping that prevails in Fandom.

For Stephen to include this slur in the final issue smacked of a cheap parting shot, especially after all the free pages of publicity D.W.B. had devoted to the project. Personally I would have liked to have seen Space & Time go out in a blaze of well-earned glory, instead of limping away with an unprovoked vitriolic outburst that served no purpose other than detriminting the image of the splendid Space & Time series. (Incidentally the project is being continued into the Tom Baker years by In-Vision whose address was obscured in their advertisement last issue. You can order a copy of their latest release, THE SONTARAN EXPERIMENT, by sending £1 50 to: Jeremy Bentham, 13 Northfield Road, BOREHAMWOOD, Herts WD6 4AE).

The next attack came in the March issue (#134) of D.W.M. and written by well-known fan Gary Russell. Unfortunately the piece is littered with gross inaccuracies and contradictions which D.W.B. wishes to set straight. (Incidentally, it's also the first time that the magazine has lowered itself to editorializing in the supposedly objective Gallifrey Guardian - admittedly something D.W.B. used to be guilty of.)

Sifting through the piece in order, Russell asserts "DOCTOR WHO is a programme that has had many different styles over 24 years, and as producer John Nathan-Turner has presided over several of them". This in itself is ironically confessing that JN-T doesn't have a clear idea of a direction in which to steer the show. All previous producers clearly knew where they wanted DOCTOR WHO to go, be it Barry Letts' earthbound action adventures or Philip Hinchcliffe's emphasis on gothic drama. By "presiding over several of them" is the same as saying the series has been wandering aimlessly over the last few years with no firm intention of where it is going - one of the major criticisms of Nathan-Turner's WHO!

Incidentally, Gary, just what is an "extreme" fan ??

Russell states we "started trying to interest national newspapers and TV in a campaign to embarrass or force the BBC to sack (JN-T)". Actually, Gary, we didn't have to try because the newspapers were immediately interested and Did You See...? actually approached us !! And the campaign did not set out to embarrass the BBC.

The claim that The Standard and The Stage "thought the fans were 'bonkers' but thought their fanaticism made good copy" is, quite simply, a gross lie since both papers deny they have ever spoken to DWM or ever made such a statement. The Standard rationally added that no newspaper would publish information coming from someone whom they suspected as being mentally maladjusted, or 'bonkers' as Gary so subtly puts it.

Next Russell goes on to describe the "two leaders of this campaign are, incidentally, the editor of a fanzine that has a name for innaccuracy and a record producer who for many years acted as a kind of unpaid historical advisor to the show". Well this is rich - Russell doesn't even have the guts to name D.W.B. or Ian Levine. What are DWM scared of? Libel suits or the publicity we might derive from such a credit? Who gives a damn, and who cares a jot about Russell's personal frustrated vendettas in what is normally such a cosy and vehement-free periodical (watch those figures tumble?). (I don't suppose the fact that Russell has never forgiven D.W.B. for dethroning his fanzine Shada from the summit of the D.W.A.S. Fanzine Poll in 1985 has anything to do with this childish outburst - you're not in The Famous Five anymore, Gary!). Labelling D.W.B. as having a name for "innac-

curacy" is also richly comical when someone as eminently qualified as David Howe has just been appointed by Marvel to ensure DWM loses its far greater reputation for erroneous information and cock-ups! This accusation might have held water three years ago, but it is now an out-of-date slur; more people than ever are turning to D.W.B. as the place to go for the most up-to-date, accurate and comprehensive coverage of the WHO-scene (interesting to note that up-to-date in DWM terms is four months later as the article refers to a campaign which started last November!).

Most inexcusable of all, however, is Russell's thinly-veiled attack upon Ian Levine. He continues: "In this capacity, he enjoyed the production team's friendship and was always in the gallery as a guest during recordings. It's ironic in particular that this man's claims that the show has declined since the casting of Peter Davison were unvoiced during the time of his association with the programme". Maybe one day Levine will earn the respect he deserves - no one fan has done more for DOCTOR WHO than he, whether it be going on News at One to help save the series, or selecting and preparing time-consuming flashback clips for such stories as LOGOPOLIS, EARTHSHOCK, MAWDRYN UNDEAD and RESURRECTION OF THE DALEKS. Maybe Russell is harbouring a jealous grudge in the belief that Levine is "selfishly" hoarding away countless missing episodes. It's about time this absurd notion was put to rest anyway - quite categorically Ian Levine's famous collection consists of nothing more than what already exists in the BBC archives. In fact over the years he has recovered and returned more missing episodes to the BBC than any other individual. Having already to put up with these ill-informed accusations, Russell's attack is all the harder to accept for someone who has done so much (and who is subsequently arguably more qualified than anyone else to pass judgement on the state of WHO's production) for the show never with a word of thanks. And for the record, Ian himself opted out of his entitlement of studio visits after being appalled by the filming of THE TWIN DILEMMA. Up to then he had enjoyed a friendship with Nathan-Turner which subsequently soured over the following 12 months, but it was the casting of Bonnie Langford that was the straw that broke the camel's back in their relationship. It was Levine who severed ties with the production office after Eric Seward informed him that JN-T had cast the song and dance star as a companion because when he phoned JN-T for confirmation, this is the conversation which ensued:

LEVINE: John, there's a silly rumour going around that you've cast Bonnie Langford as a new companion. Of course you'd never do something as silly as that, would you?

JN-T: Of course not (laughing)! Where did you hear that from... That was their penultimate encounter. The last time they ever spoke was when JN-T arrived on Levine's doorstep to collect a proof for The Companions book which he'd asked Levine to correct. Naturally Levine declined the invitation.

Gary Russell even has the nerve to claim that Jeremy Bentham's points on Did You See...? were let down "only by the way in which they were expressed". For someone who seems to be half as literate as Fandom's most respected writer, this speaks for itself!

While dismissing as "self-righteous fury" the efforts of his fellow fans, he is quick to accept the BBC's rose-tinted claim that "as far as we're concerned (JN-T's) doing a good job" and an anonymous D.W.A.S. "spokesman" who announces that "most members like the new show". Russell concludes that these two 'statements' thus "would seem to back this (JN-T) having nothing to defend about DOCTOR WHO" up! Writing for DWM Gary Russell obviously receives special privileges from the production office, and his recent unforgivably sycophantic interview with JN-T appears to confirm this. He seems to be on very friendly terms with Nathan-Turner who, as advisor, will no doubt have had a say in the article anyway, so what is presented as opinion against Operation WHO is, in fact, a pathetic attempt to devalue our efforts.

Gary Russell finishes by summing that we created Operation WHO simply because we were "seeking personal publicity". Now this would seem quite funny if he wasn't being so serious! However, I will say this: As a commercial publication DWM exists to make money for its publishers, while D.W.B. exists as a service to the fans. If D.W.B. sees fit to represent a majority of its readers via a campaign then that is its prerogative - it is certainly not the business of DWM to cast a critical analysis over our motives. Hopefully, with a new editorial line-up, when discussing future fan issues more discretion will be exercised by DWM in the future...

MOVIE NEWS

With casting of a suitable lead actor still unconfirmed, the producers of the forthcoming DOCTOR WHO movie, Coast to Coast, have asked current TV producer John Nathan-Turner to accept a position of Creative Consultant on the project as they strive to find an appropriate 'big name' star to play the part of the screen Doctor in the wake of hot favourites Tom Conti and John Cleese declining their invitation.

Last issue we exclusively reported that the screenplay has been written by Mark Ezra. This is being adapted into a final form by experienced WHO-writer Johnny (KEEPER OF TRAKEN/ARC OF INFINITY/WARRIORS OF THE DEEP) Byrne. Because of these delays the release date of the film has been set back to Easter 1989 and so will miss the planned 25th anniversary release scheduled for November. It can now be confirmed that one of the big U.S. film companies, either 20th Century Fox or M.G.M., have ploughed a lot of money into the project to secure distribution rights, and the movie is being treated with the respect of any other large-scale effort.

The story itself includes a renegade Time Lord and will centre on a thrilling chase through time taking the Doctor to different periods on Earth and other planets. There will be no recognisable enemies from the series, but a host of new alien races are being devised specially for the movie. Caroline Munro - one of the Doctor's three companions - will be called Cora, a Gallifreyan Tardis engineer and is set to be teamed up with a similarly-aged actor to play the Doctor because of the amount of action the film requires.

LEVINE ON LBC

Ian Levine was interviewed on London's news station LBC to discuss his record-producing career on 5th March. Speaking on Steve Allen's 7 30 evening show, the talk briefly focussed on Ian's involvement with DOCTOR WHO:

SA: If I don't get this next bit in we're going to be in trouble because I keep mentioning it every time Ian Levine pops into the studio - you're a big DOCTOR WHO fan aren't you?

IL: Well, more than just a fan I would have said. I was fanatical about it as a lad, I mean, I was 9-years-old and obsessed with it and I was actually the official advisor to the BBC on it. I wrote all the articles for the Radio Times about DOCTOR WHO and they did a 20th anniversary special in 1983 for which I did all the research and wrote all the articles for.

SA: What is the fascination with it?

IL: It just appeals to me personally, the whole concept of someone going anywhere in time and space in an old police telephone box.

SA: But it's degenerated into a lot of old twaddle now...

IL: Yes, of course it is, it's dreadful.

SA: Oh good, you agree!

IL: This is why I was in nine newspapers being quoted because I had written an article for a fan magazine called DOCTOR WHO Bulletin in which I said that the producer was to blame because the BBC had originally postponed the show in 1985 in a sort of flurry that looked like they'd cancelled it and I was interviewed live on ITV's News at One to actually put the case to bring DOCTOR WHO back - and then I publically said, when it came back worse than ever, "Why did I bother?". I mean, I wanted the show like it was in the '60s and '70s...

SA: Actually frightening?

IL: Oh, it was great. On a low budget they managed to get good directors and good scripts, but the producer of the show - John Nathan-Turner - has actually ruined it for me and a lot of other people. This fan magazine, DOCTOR WHO Bulletin, then did a survey of its readers - and they've got a few thousand readers - and 99% of the readers, 99%, wanted to get rid of the producer. But people at the BBC like Jonathan Powell, who was Head of Drama but he went on to become Controller of programmes - he's a great man, he produced one of my all-time great series called The Old Men at the Zoo which was like a nuclear war/black comedy sort of thing - he seemed, for some reason when Michael Grade was there, he seemed to close off his ears to the fact that people were saying that it wasn't the actors or the show itself that was at fault; it was the producer because his concept was to take DOCTOR WHO into a sort of Morecambe & Wise light entertainment vein so that you get Beryl Reid and you get Joan Simms...and an endless, endless array of variety star guests every show, which is not what the show's about. The show is about frightening people - it's not about making the monsters look like sort of comic rubber suits and putting comedy actors opposite them as guest stars. And he's managed to assemble the worst set of directors I've ever seen on television. Directors who are adept to doing soap operas but not at something that needs a bit of atmosphere and dark lighting. I mean, they're lit like the Les Dawson Show - white light, straight up!! There's no atmosphere.

I don't want to see the show end. It's a great love of mine and I want to see it go on with a new producer. It needs a new blood. It needs someone to care about the drama that it is.

(NEWS CONTINUED OVERLEAF...)

SEASON 25

Sylvester McCoy is to be pitted against some of the series' greatest adversaries in anniversary year! The first story of Season 25 is titled REMEMBRANCE OF THE DALEKS and is written by newcomer Ben Aaronovitch (whom some people have suggested might be a pseudonym) and directed by Andrew (TIME AND THE RANI) Morgan. The adventure is set in the England of December 1963 and intriguingly includes scenes set within Coal Hill School... The story predictably sees the return of Davros, as well as The Emperor Dalek - this time based on the '60s comic version as opposed to the one seen in THE EVIL OF THE DALEKS. Apparently script editor Andrew Cartmel has had to battle

against time to get the scripts into a workable form ready for rehearsals as the first scripts were allegedly rejected out-of-hand on instructions from Terry Nation when they were submitted to the Roger Hancock Organisation (Nation's agent) for approval. Exercising an option open to him under terms of his joint agreement with the BBC on all Dalek stories, Nation has insisted on script approval for all Dalek serials, and is being especially cautious after seeing, and being appalled by, a recent broadcast of RESURRECTION OF THE DALEKS in the States. The story will also feature large numbers of Daleks in many of the scenes, and to economically overcome this need the Visual Effects Department has assembled a collection of 'jelly mould' Daleks made from casts of the REVELATION casings. The Department has also been asked to supply the casings in bright green, bright blue, orange and red. Music will be provided by Keff McCulloch.

Story two is provisionally titled GREATEST SHOW IN THE

MARKETING NEWS

COMPILED BY JEREMY BENTHAM

'DAPOL' REGENERATES WHO TOY MARKET

After nearly seven years in the doldrums, the DOCTOR WHO toy market is once again buoyant. Dapol (not Kenner as previously stated), a British toy company most associated with plastic figures and accessories for model railways, released in February a set of six DOCTOR WHO toys aimed at the male, sub-teen and upwards bracket: the age group most associated with purchasing the hit Star Wars and Masters of the Universe ranges.

Dapol's initial releases are, with the exception of the spring-powered K9, all from the 24th Season, at the insistence of the BBC who granted a license for this million pound project as far back as last summer.

Officially unveiled at the Olympia staged British Toy Fair in January (where all manufacturers keen to interest stockists for the key autumn-to-Christmas selling period exhibit), some of the Dapol toys on display were only prototypes due to production delays.

The Tetrap figures will be the last to go on sale once the problem of bonding the wings to the body is overcome. An early prototype featured hard, perspex wings, but this has now been dropped in favour of flexible, vinyl wings that will make the creature more bat-like.

More serious is the re-design of the battery-operated TARDIS console. Supplied by the BBC only with photographs for reference, the Dapol design team made an error of assuming the console was five-sided, not six. Subsequently asked by the BBC to withdraw this item from sale, Dapol declined, having already invested substantial sums in its development and production.

If the range sells well, Dapol have promised to redesign the console, which would inevitably lead to the five-sided version gaining rarity status among collectors.

Figures of the Doctor (McCoy), Melanie, K9 and a Tetrap, plus the console and a police box, will be available either singly in blister packs, or all together in a limited edition gift set for around £40. The gift set, however, will only be commercially available in 1988 to mark DOCTOR WHO's 25th anniversary.

Other Dapol DOCTOR WHO products this year include Doctor and Melanie play suits for under-tens, and two more figures; an EARTHSHOCK Cyberman and a REVELATION Dalek promised for the autumn. A Tom Baker Doctor is on the drawing board but no firm plans exist yet for it to go into production.

Distribution in England will mainly be through the Toymaster chain. No major distributor has yet been signed up for Northern America or Australasia.

OLD DALEKS FOR NEW IN '88

Hard on the heels of the new Dapol range comes the announcement of a re-release for several of the 1960s Louis Marx Dalek toys.

Although Denby-Marx collapsed and ceased trading as a toy corporation in 1980, its organisation was then split-up and sold off, with many of its manufacturing facilities and tools now in the hands of independent companies.

Now, using the Marx name, plans are afoot to issue the 'tricky-action' Dalek, the friction-drive version and the Bagatelle game to new generations in time for the Daleks' TV return this autumn (see left).

Describing their plans to delegates at the Toy

Fair, the marketing group stated the toys would, unlike the 1973 re-issue, be packaged as they had been in the '60s since the firm had also acquired the original box artwork for these items. Sadly, however, the second most popular Marx toy of all time, the 1" Rolykin, will not be making a comeback as the moulds have been lost.

NATION TO TELL ALL

Yet more Daleks! News from New York has confirmed a September release date for another item of Dalek merchandise: the official history of the Daleks as told by their writer/creator Terry Nation.

Authored by John Peel, the book will detail Terry Nation's memories of those ground-making years and will include never-before-printed material from Nation's own archive.

From the first draft of the pilot script, readers will learn how Barbara Wright was originally conceived as a young student teacher, how early versions of the first Dalek story included references to shops inside the Skaro city, how Nation and David Whitaker disagreed over the concept of an Emperor Dalek, and, as a worldwide first, how the planned American-filmed Dalek series would have evolved had the poor audiences for the Peter Cushing films out there not cancelled the enterprise.

AUTONS SPEARHEAD VIDEO CHARTS

Once again a DOCTOR WHO video release has soared to the summit of the budget video charts.

Launched in February, Jon Pertwee's debut adventure SPEARHEAD FROM SPACE reached number two in the national charts after just a fortnight on sale, with trade again brisk at the Virgin Megastore in London's famous Oxford Street which again sported a large display in its front hall advertising the re-priced ROBOTS OF DEATH and DAY OF THE DALEKS tapes as well, both of which have also been selling like the proverbial hot cakes!

The Auton photographs on the SPEARHEAD FROM SPACE box design (see right) were produced from slides taken directly from the 16mm film master - the only DOCTOR WHO story that can afford this luxury to the BBC Enterprises cover designers.

ALL CHANGE AT MARVEL

Striving to boost sales and appeal of the flagging DOCTOR WHO Magazine (sales figures are reputedly down to 28,000 from 45,000 previously), Marvel Comics have made several changes to its editorial line-up. D.W.A.S. luminary David Howe has been appointed to the post of Consultant to tighten up the technical integrity of the feature article material in the wake of several cryptically described 'incidents'.

More importantly, the editorial reigns are being phased over to the currently credited Design Supervisor, John Freeman, himself a D.W.A.S. member from the Society's early days.

Keen to revamp the comic strip more closely into DOCTOR WHO mythology, one of John's interests is examining past DOCTOR WHO strips (including those from TV Comic and Countdown) with a view possibly to re-introducing some of their elements and characters into the present series of Sylvester McCoy adventures.

GALAXY and is set within an intergalactic circus. Penned by Stephen (PARADISE TOWERS) Wyatt, it will be directed by first-timer Alan Wareing and is said to be akin in concept to CARNIVAL OF MONSTERS. The designers have been asked to create a large "marshmallow" creature for this story.

Story three heralds the return of the Master in a one-word titled adventure beginning with the letter 'M'! The Cybermen will also be returning next season and they are tipped also to appear in the third story.

Director Chris Clough and musician Dominic Glyn will again be contributing to Season 25 and a reminder that the four stories are broken up into 4-4-3-3 episode segments with story three shot entirely on OB.

CONVENTIONS

Various conventions are taking shape around the country this anniversary year. As well as FalCon III (see ad this issue) and a three-day Panopticon taking place in mid-September, the Merseyside Local Group celebrate their 10th anniversary with a two-day event on May 28-29th. Details from Graeme Wood at 48 Western Avenue, Speke, Liverpool L24 3UR. The North Essex Local Group will be staging a one-day event on August 20th (send a SAE to Alan Disdale, 3 Woodford Close, Great Clacton, Essex CO15 4UD).

CONTRADICTIONS

Despite being snubbed on the BBC's recent special See For Yourself, the accompanying handbook featured an interview with the Chief Executive of BBC Enterprises - James Arnold-Baker - who described DOCTOR WHO as "...probably our biggest seller. It's Lionheart (the BBC's U.S. distributor) 's biggest success, mainly because of its huge cult following in the States." Meanwhile Down Under The Sydney Morning Herald reported that: "A BBC executive visiting here let on that Yes, Minister and its successor Yes, Prime Minister never achieved a domestic audience of more than four or five million viewers. The BBC regards anything under ten million as less than successful and anything under five million a positive flop. But the saving grace for Yes, Prime Minister has been its exceptionally high viewer approval rating - 81%." Season 25 averaged only 60%.

RATINGS

Unfortunately DRAGONFIRE failed to catapult Season 25 through the six million barrier: (S25 av = 4.9m)

EPISODE ONE - 5.5m
EPISODE TWO - 5.0m
EPISODE THREE - 4.9m



starring
JON PERTWEE in
SPEARHEAD
from SPACE
By Robert Holmes

VHS
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4107

SPEARHEAD
from SPACE



Forbidden to continue his travels through time and space by his fellow Time Lords, the newly regenerated Doctor begins his exile on Earth and finds himself hurled into one of his most exciting and terrifying adventures...

But the Doctor is not the only alien intelligence arriving on the planet. A shower of mysterious meteorites signals the coming of the

Nestene Consciousness - an evil, cosmic, collective being with just one goal - total conquest of Earth. The Nestenes possess a special ability to control plastic and are making hordes of Autons - indestructible, armed, plastic mannikins, only awaiting the Nestene command to start their killer rampage.

Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart, scientist Liz Shaw and U.N.I.T. enlist the Doctor's help to defeat the relentless Auton invasion, but the Doctor has problems of his own...

Running time: 92 mins approx
Produced by Derrick Sherwin
Directed by Derek Martinus



UNIVERSAL
Suitable
for all

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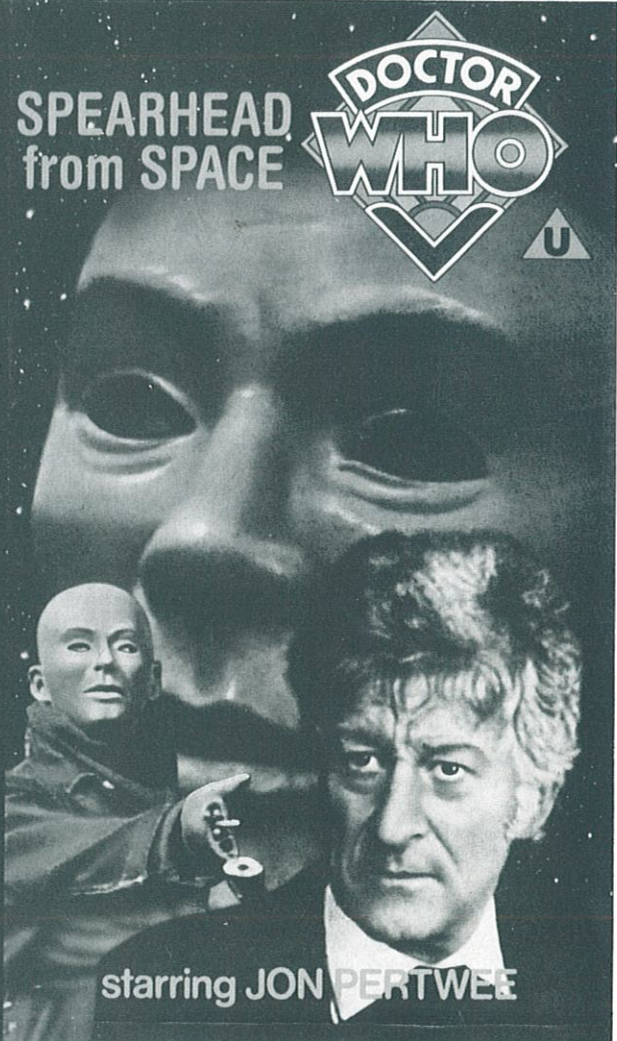
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SPEARHEAD
from SPACE

BBC
VIDEO

starring **JON PERTWEE**



JN-T CHANGES IMAGE

John Nathan-Turner has shaved off his famous beard, and in a complete change of style has also had his hair cut short and slicked back. The big question is who is he trying to hide from...

POLLS

The results of the DWAS season poll correspond with D.W.B.'s own star ratings system: 1st) DRAGONFIRE, 2nd) DELTA AND THE BANNERMEN, 3) PARADISE TOWERS, 4th) TIME AND THE RANI.

Congratulations to The Frame team who pipped D.W.B. at the post in the latest DWAS fanzine poll.

ALL CLEAR AT SUPERCHANNEL

SuperChannel have obtained clearance for all of Seasons 12-14 and have been assured that Season 15 will be cleared and available for transmission in the near future.

THEATRE NEWS

Tom Baker will be appearing at the Greenwich Theatre in London in Musical Comedy Murders of 1940 from 23rd March to 7th May. Meanwhile Colin Baker opened in a national tour of Deathtrap at the Alexandra Theatre in Birmingham on 29th February. (Reviewed next issue)

OVERSEAS

AUSTRALIA: While our Antipodean cousins may bemoan the Doctor's lunchtime slot on ABC, they still fare considerably better in terms of the repeats they receive. Starting with THE HORROR OF FANG ROCK they have been treated to a virtually uninterrupted run of omnibus repeats with standard 4-parters lasting 1½ hours and THE INVASION OF TIME and THE ARMAGEDDON FACTOR running - wait for it - non-stop for 2½ hours! As you read this they will be embarking yet again on the 18th Season, but ABC - the state owned TV company - have yet to purchase Season 25.

AMERICA: Jay Badenhop from Wisconsin disturbingly reports "Many cities are dropping DOCTOR WHO altogether due to steep hikes up in price of the episodes by Lionheart, the distributor, and its selling of the show in 'packages' that require commitments of a year's worth of episodes - in other words 52 stories, not 25-minute episodes, at a time. Public TV faces these pay rises at the same time as tightening of funds, and our personal opinion is that lack of funds is mostly due to poor publicity and the average station manager's appalling refusal to learn about the show enough to convince people that they should pledge money for DOCTOR WHO. The latest casualty as a result is the local PBS station in Milwaukee in Wisconsin which ended with a run of Pertwee episodes in February."

EXCELLENT NEW LOGO !

SEAN PICKETT, Bedford, USA

I think your new look is excellent. I wasn't too keen when I saw the new logo along with the ad in #49, but when I saw it on the actual cover of #50 I was very impressed. Even though it is less than half the size of your old logo, it stands out. It looks very good with the white on color and black trim and I would like to see you continuing to use color in the logo instead of just black and white, and I once again vote for photocovers whenever appropriate. (I also think that the green/red Christmassy headers were a nice touch !).

Since I live in the US, I was pleased that you had the full account of the DOCTOR WHO feature that appeared on Did You See...? I would like to comment on all the letters you have printed slagging off JN-T. How many of these writers that have slagged him off voted for THE CAVES OF ANDROZANI as an All-Time Classic ? 237 did and 67 of those voted it number one. What about EARTHSHOCK (194 and 12 respectively) or REVELATION OF THE DALEKS (144 and 7) or LOGOPOLIS (118 and 7) or MINDWARP (83 and 2) and THE FIVE DOCTORS (87 and 5) ? I have slagged off JN-T and I admit that I voted THE FIVE DOCTORS eighth on my list. I make no excuses but I voted for it because I enjoyed watching Patrick Troughton and Jon Pertwee together again. As for the others I mentioned, I am sorry to say I did not even remember THE CAVES OF ANDROZANI until I looked at the survey results. Just remember; even though JN-T is currently ruining the show, he also produced some very good stories (according to the 1986 D.W.B. Series Survey). Do not condemn all his stories simply because he produced them.

Also, I think Pip & Jane (is that their legal name ? I mean, when you mean them do you always say "Hi, Pip and Jane", even if only one is present ? Or are they always together ?? We in the States have our own Bakkers to abuse; Jim and Tammy !!) are to be commended for writing to you and stating that they wrote TRIAL in its entirety (even though I knew, and I was certainly NOT losing any sleep whatsoever over it) !

The star rating, review and fan views of DELTA AND THE BANNERMEN once again seem to indicate that DOCTOR WHO is not improving. I, of course, will not be able to see Season 24 until some time next summer where I will attempt to watch the stories with an open mind (but with a closed skull !).

The In-Vision preview has only whetted my appetite for more. I subscribed to Space and Time and your preview has me waiting eagerly for the first issue of In-Vision. I only subscribed to Space and Time this summer after I read about it in a D.W.B. back issue (#24-25) and I have not been disappointed.

Finally last, but definitely not least, I think the feature on Operation Werewolf was the highlight of the 50th issue. I was completely fascinated by it and it was an interesting look at the process of writing a television script. The synopsis led me to conclude that it could have been one of the best DOCTOR WHO stories ever. I hope that W.H.Allen do go ahead and novelise it.

EDITOR: Pleased you like the new logo Sean, but what do other readers think ? We have gone back to more 'colorful' covers for the time being and we haven't ruled out the possibility of more photocovers in the future where appropriate.

D.W.B. has never disputed the fact that JN-T has, through luck or judgement, produced a few excellent DOCTOR WHO stories but, as Eric Seward revealed, THE CAVES OF ANDROZANI, for example, was most definitely luck !

BEST WHO-RELATED PUBLICATION

PIETRO ROSEO, Carshalton, SURREY

Firstly I should like to say how much I enjoy your magazine; it has to be the best of all the WHO-related publications which are available.

The thing which makes it worth the read for me

DALEKS DUMPED FOR 'BILL & BEN'!

LEAD LETTER FROM: BEN KEYWOOD, *Workshop*, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

HAVING WATCHED the BBC's two-hour 'special' on Sunday January 3rd, I wonder if I was the only one who noticed the blatant absence of DOCTOR WHO from the programme ? There were many instances where DOCTOR WHO could - and should have been included, one such example being the BBC Enterprises section where, on mentioning best-selling videos, DEATH TO THE DALEKS was totally ignored and Watch With Mother and Steptoe and Son highlighted instead. This is shameful, especially considering that DEATH TO THE DALEKS topped the UK's budget video chart and remained the number one seller at Virgin and W.H.Smiths for three weeks. Likewise, when arrogantly boasting about overseas sales of BBC programmes, again DOCTOR WHO did not feature - despite the accompanying article in the Radio Times supplement where DOCTOR WHO is quoted - by the Head of Enterprises - as "THE NUMBER ONE" profit-making programme on merchandising and sales (even after EastEnders etc etc.). Yet 'Allo 'Allo and EastEnders were highlighted.

To me - and I'm certainly not being paranoid - it seemed that DOCTOR WHO was deliberately being snubbed and received not even the smallest of mentions. With treatment like this I'm sure that any advice offered to the BBC on the poor state of DOCTOR WHO will only fall on defiantly deaf ears - which brings me on nicely to my next point concerning your letter and delayed response from Jonathan Powell. Like you, I sent a letter to Powell outlining the decline of the programme and highlighting Nathan-Turner as the cause. I pointed out the overt humour, the lack of real drama and tension and the total disappearance of suitably crafted alien cultures and frightening monsters. However, unlike you I received a reply within 7 days !

This was Powell's response to these points: "Many thanks for your letter. I am delighted that you like Sylvester McCoy and I note your other comments."

Well ! Considering the main gist of my letter was referred to by Powell as "other comments", I can't see much interest on his behalf at all.

is that you cover subjects which are considered taboo by other magazines. Also your news and letters pages are most informative with regard to the present state of the show.

I for one am in full support of your campaign against JN-T and feel that Season 24 was the worst ever. Even the DWAS magazine The Celestial Toyroom seems to have degenerated alongside the show, so I'm glad to see D.W.B. shall be keeping up its high standards.

JEALOUS FANZINE EDITORS

DALE BROTHERTON, Birkdale Hall, CUMBRIA
Whatever some people say about D.W.B. (95% are only jealous fanzine editors !), they can't deny the great effort you are doing in this country and cementing relations abroad (D.W.B. Offers and your recent trip to Australia to name but two examples) in the cause of Fandom. May I wish you continued success in 1988 along with a turnaround in the present ludicrous state of the programme.

D.W.B.#50 - A SPLENDID PIECE OF WORK !!

SIMON CUNNINGTON, Littlehampton, SUSSEX
Your 50th issue was a splendid piece of work and I hope you're proud of it.

I've been reading D.W.B. since its 10th issue and it seems appropriate that you celebrate your half-century with an edition which seems to be a collection of high-spots: a sharp analysis of the last story in McCoy's first season; a McCoy interview which ought to show the folk at D.W.M. how it should be done; The Feast of Steven Photonovel; THE EVIL OF THE DALEKS feature; and the sensational Operation Werewolf scoop.

The point being that D.W.B. is surely a more convincing tribute to DOCTOR WHO itself than the DWAS' CT which still has a college-clique feel about it at times - the tone is usually that of a sixth-form photographic society newsletter, to be blunt. And yes, I do appreciate that CT is essentially a newsletter; however, my criticism is based on its style, not its form.

BEST PRODUCTION VALUES

SEAN GIBBONS, Co.Donegal, IRELAND

I have been a reader of D.W.B. since about issue 10, through thick and thin, controversy et al,

and while at times I can't agree with everything - nothing's perfect - overall D.W.B. has been the best, most delightful, most infuriating and mature zine around. Passion for the very best of DOCTOR WHO is to be found within your pages as well as the best production values of any DOCTOR WHO publication (bar, perhaps, The Radio Times 20th Anniversary Special).

Where do you go from here ? Forward, I hope, and I look forward eagerly to 1988's run of issues.

WHY I SUBSCRIBE

LOUIS HIRSHORN, Philadelphia, USA

May I congratulate you on not only putting out 50 issues, but making the 50th issue of D.W.B. THE BEST I've ever read ! The features were fantastic; from the Sylvester McCoy interview, The Feast of Steven Photonovel and THE EVIL OF THE DALEKS, all the way up to the magnificent feature on Operation Werewolf ! Please keep it up. This is why I subscribe to D.W.B. - for the best news and information on the stories that I've seen, as well as ones that are missing or unmade.

FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

Dr.D.CARLILE, Sutton Coldfield, W.MIDS

I can still remember the first issues of D.W.B. I found in a tiny backstreet shop in London. They were the first two glossy issues and the immediately preceding one (8-10 - Ed), and I don't think I've enjoyed anything as much as reading those three. After having no source of information other than the Monthly, those issues came as a breath of fresh air. D.W.B. has never been perfect, but always very good; The Roger Delgado Tribute was particularly excellent.

It is quite ironic that you seem to be going from strength to strength at a time when the programme itself is staggering around its grave. I have now seen all of Season 24 and a bloody disgrace it was ! If I sat down with a thesaurus I couldn't begin to say how bad I thought TIME AND THE RANI, PARADISE TOWERS and DRAGONFIRE were. The only story which had enjoyable elements was DELTA AND THE BANNERMEN - and even here I would agree with most of the criticisms which have been levelled at it. I suppose we should be grateful that we have seen the last of

Mel (poor Glitz...!) though I can't say I'm impressed with "Ace"; I keep thinking of Dodo - even their real names (Dorothea and Dorothy) are too close for comfort.

But not everything is bad. Every so often you can see how good a Doctor McCoy could be if he wasn't saddled with a costume (instead of clothes, I mean), appalling scripts and worse companions.

AN UTTER WASTE OF TIME AND EFFORT

DAVID WEIDES, Minnesota, USA

I have been lucky enough to have seen the first seven episodes of the new season and I feel comfortable in declaring what an utter waste of time and effort it is. JN-T has ascended to heights that Graham Williams and Douglas Adams could only have dreamt of in Season 17 in the spoofy, silly air that envelopes the program these days. Nevertheless I am in agreement with many of the opinions and letters that I have read both in D.W.B. and elsewhere that Sly, if freed from restraints, could well be a very good Doctor - that is, if he can get out from under the weight of some of the most labored dialogue and acting I have ever heard uttered on the screen. Let us all hope that Jonathan Powell's successor sees fit to breathe new life into the program before it really is too late.

DOUBLE STANDARDS ?

R.RIZZO, New York, USA

It's amazing how Ian Levine can say how great the first 18 years of DOCTOR WHO was - does he forget what he said about Season 17 and Graham Williams in DOCTOR WHO: The Unfolding Text ? And how great Seasons 18 and 19 were - does he forget who produced them ? I'm not defending JN-T - the past three years are the worst in the show's great history - but Mr.Levine appears to say one thing in a book and another in newspapers. Maybe

he should remember Season 15 and stories like UNDERWORLD - does Mr.Levine believe there was great care lavished by the then producer on that season ?

EDITOR: As our interview with Graham Williams three years ago illustrated, he clearly did care for the series but budgetary restraints and other major factors were not in his favour. And there is little doubt that JN-T equally cared for DOCTOR WHO - at least in his first few years - but the point is that his attitude has now degenerated to that of a time-server who will let anything go for a quieter life - which is a far more serious situation for the series to be in. I know which season I'd take to a desert island if I had to choose between Season 17 and Seasons 23/24 together !

SEASON 23 "WAS THE ALL-TIME LOW"

ROBERT UNSWORTH, SOUTHPORT

I admire the way you are maintaining your efforts to save the show but I find it interesting to note that the general attitude at the moment seems to be that the rot set in in 1980 with JN-T's arrival. Whilst I agree the man has stayed around far too long and should go, surely it was not until Season 22 that the downward trend really became apparent and before that much of his DOCTOR WHO was excellent; a fact which many people are now ignoring. To me it was Season 23, not 24, which was the all-time low except for a few brief sparks. I know I'm in a minority but I enjoyed the last season and found it entertaining - something the previous self-indulgent offerings were certainly not. Of course, at times the season had serious failings (i.e. the acting, that famous DRAGONFIRE 'cliff'hanger, indeed perhaps the whole of that story), but the first three stories were a refreshing change from the norm. I found myself sitting down and watching Season 24 in a way I had never done before - just treating it as a television programme. I

was undoubtedly helped in this by the fact that I can no longer really call myself a DOCTOR WHO fan in that I have given up reading the books, magazines, fanzines, etc., and have D.W.B. as my only contact with my previous interest. This is the reason I enjoyed the last series more; because I could look on it as I do, say EastEnders or Coronation Street, not as Season 24, Story 150 or whatever. It really is fun not being as much a fan as I used to be !

DELUSIONS OF A 'TELEGRAPH' JOURNALIST

JANE EVANS, Lichfield, STAFFS

I found Charles Spencer's article from The Daily Telegraph (DOCTOR WHO's Darkest Hour, D.W.B.#51), one of the most fascinating pieces of writing I've come across in a long time.

It seemed to me that Mr.Spencer expressed himself in terms that reveal him as much an appreciator of DOCTOR WHO as any of us. He admitted to having seen the first episode and "that even after 24 years (he) can remember the wonder" he experienced then. One wonders if his lapse in viewing may have been more the result of circumstances beyond his control (boarding school, Saturday afternoon sports...) than lack of interest in the series since he refers to his "delirious anticipation" of the programme and to finding it "deliciously terrifying" prior to boarding school days. His paragraph on Tom Baker is as apt and appreciative a summary of the qualities of that particular era of DOCTOR WHO as I have read in any fanzine and this leads me to think that Mr.Spencer not only saw a fair number of episodes at that time but enjoyed them too ! His comments on Peter Davison and Colin Baker, though more superficial, betray a continuation of interest over those years together with a considered judgement of DOCTOR WHO's changing facets.

LETTERS CONT'D PAGE 12...



SYLVESTER MCCOY, SOPHIE ALDRED, JONATHAN ADAMS, CHRIS BOUCHER, TERRY WALSH, EVGENY GRINDEFF, COLIN BAKER, INNES LLOYD, RICHARD O'BRIEN, PETER DAVISON, TONY SELBY, NICK COURTNEY.....

All these guests will be attending FALCON 3, which is being held at its regular venue of the LADBROKE BAUFORT HOTEL, BATH. Over the weekend of SATURDAY 9th AND SUNDAY 10th JULY 1988.

If you register before the 1st May 1988, it will cost you only £15.00 for both days, £8.00 for one day (please specify) and £4.00 supporting.

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Why not celebrate 25 years of DOCTOR WHO by joining in possibly one of the best conventions to be held this year. Enjoy TWO DAYS of fun in the company of guests from the world of DOCTOR WHO and STAR COPS.

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(All guests attending work permitting)

REGISTRATION FORM

FULL NAME:-.....

NAME YOU WANT ON BADGE:-.....

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Tel; No:-..... (WORK/HOME)

PLEASE REGISTER.....PERSON(S) FOR BOTH DAYS/ SATURDAY/ OR SUNDAY, OF FALCON 3. I ENCLOSE A CHEQUE/POSTAL ORDER FOR £.....MADE PAYABLE TO 'FALCON'

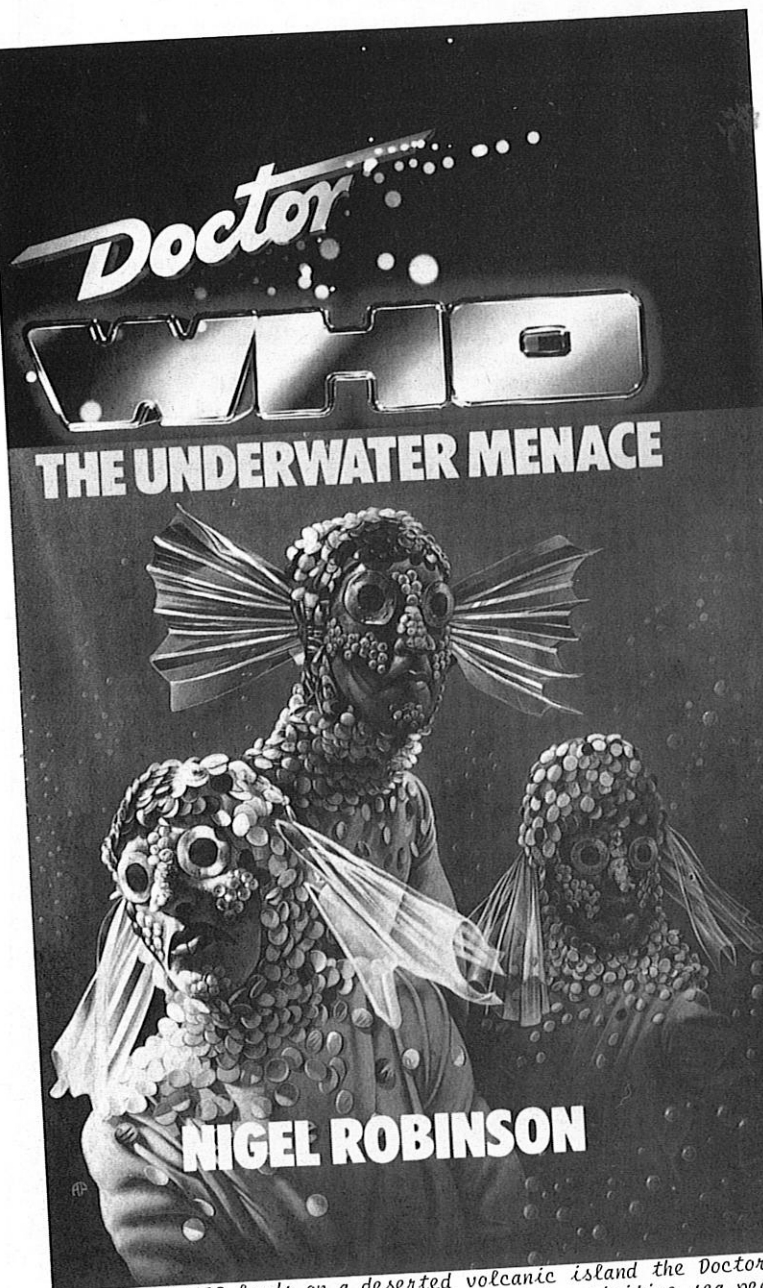
(If you are registering more than one person, please send a list of their full names with this form)

PLEASE SEND ME DETAILS ABOUT THE FOLLOWING:-
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ACCOMMODATION
DRAMA COMPETITION
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FANCY DRESS PARADE

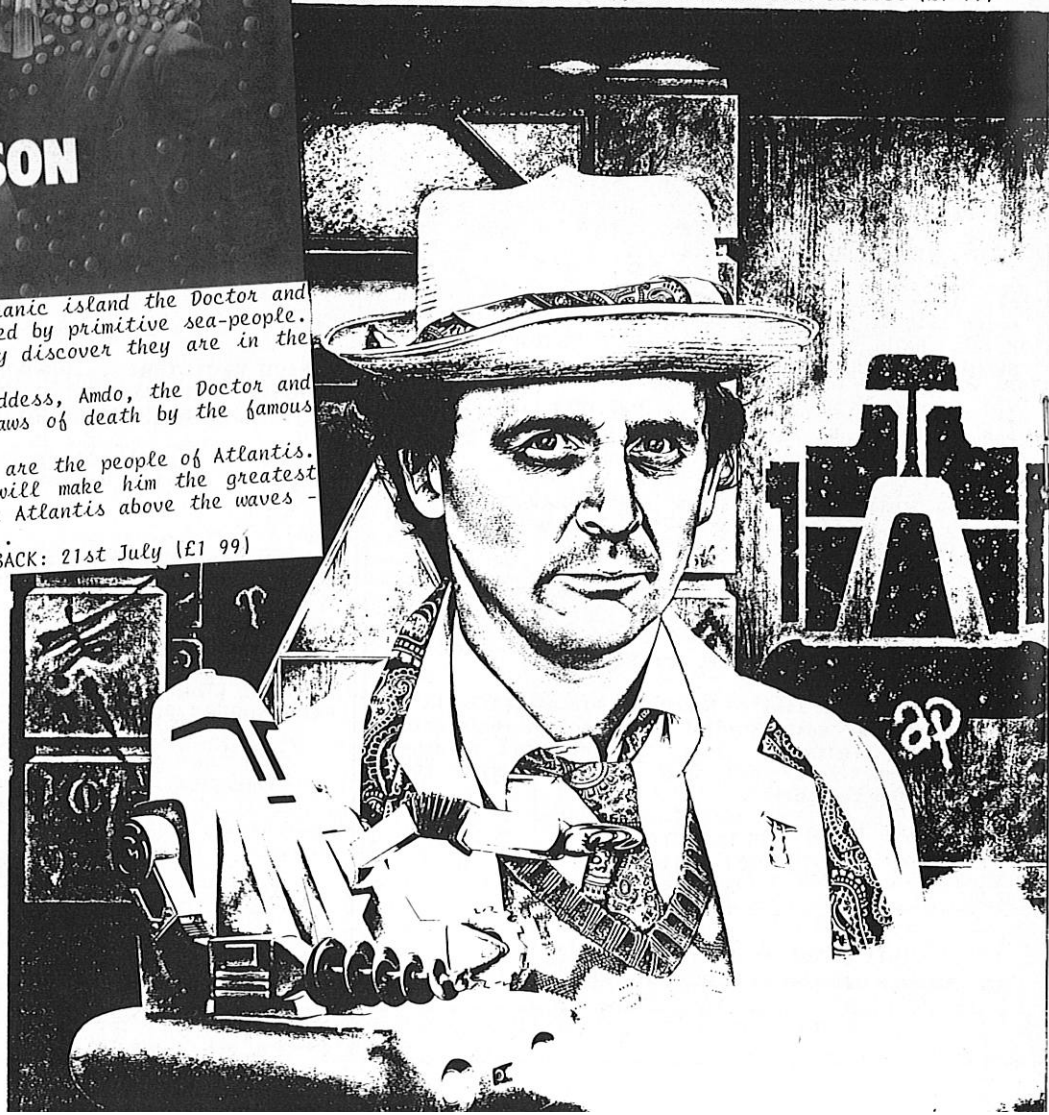
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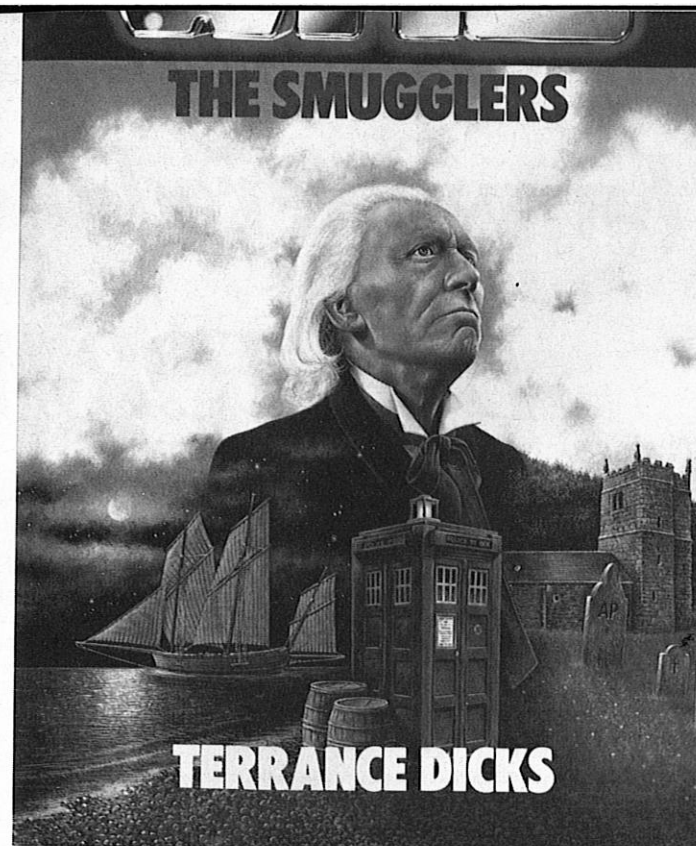


When the TARDIS lands on a deserted volcanic island the Doctor and his companions find themselves kidnapped by primitive sea-people. Taken into the bowels of the earth they discover they are in the lost kingdom of Atlantis. Offered as sacrifices to the fish-goddess, Amdo, the Doctor and his companions are rescued from the jaws of death by the famous scientist, Zaroff. But they are still not safe and nor are the people of Atlantis. For Zaroff has a plan, a plan that will make him the greatest scientist of all time - he will raise Atlantis above the waves - even if it means destroying the world...
HARDBACK: Now available (£7 95), PAPERBACK: 21st July (£1 99)

The latest cover painting to be completed by Alister Pearson for Target is for PARADISE TOWERS and it sees the long-awaited return of a 'current' Doctor to the book covers. Originally Alister had been told that Sylvester wasn't keen to be depicted artistically on book covers, but when he went along to the National Theatre to see McCoy in The Pied Piper, Sylvester revealed that nobody had actually ever asked him and he had no reservations about Alister 'tackling' his features. They mutually agreed that the BBC postcard should be used for reference as it was a good pose. Thanks to Alister for supplying as with a copy of the artwork together with an initial sketch for his next



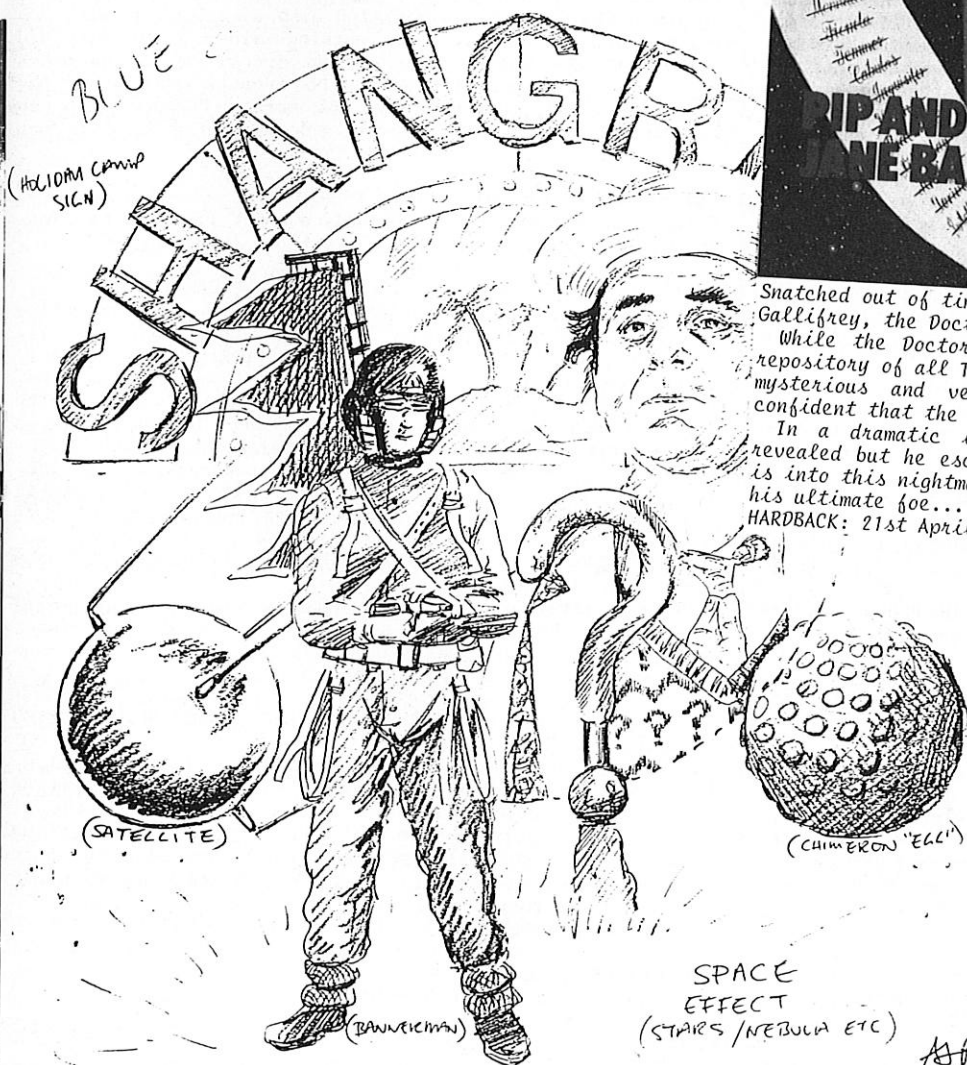
In a final bid to regain control of the TARDIS's faulty control system the Doctor is driven to experiment with a dangerous untried combination. With a violent explosion the TARDIS blacks out and the crew find themselves trapped inside. A simple technical fault? Sabotage? Or something even more sinister? Tension mounts as the Doctor and his companions begin to suspect one another. What has happened to the TARDIS? Slowly a terrifying suspicion dawns. Has the TARDIS become the prisoner of some powerful fifth intelligence which is even now haunting the time-machine's dark and gloomy corridors?
HARDBACK: 5th May (£7 95), PAPERBACK: 20th October (£1 99)



A 17th century Cornish town - villainous pirates roam the seas searching for treasure while the townspeople have turned to smuggling, wheeling and dealing in contraband. Into this wild and remote place the TARDIS materializes and the Doctor and his companions find themselves caught up in the dubious activities of the locals. When the Doctor is unwittingly given a clue to the whereabouts of the treasure the pirates are determined to extract the information - whatever the cost...
HARDBACK: 16th June (£7 95), PAPERBACK: 17th November (£1 99)



Snatched out of time and place and brought before the Time Lords of Gallifrey, the Doctor is on trial for his life. While the Doctor asserts that the evidence of the Matrix, the repository of all Time Lord knowledge, has been tampered with, the mysterious and vengeful prosecuting council, the Valeyard, is confident that the Doctor will be sentenced to death. In a dramatic intervention the Valeyard's true identity is revealed but he escapes from the Courtroom into the Matrix, and it is into this nightmare world that the Doctor must follow - to face his ultimate foe...
HARDBACK: 21st April (£7 95), PAPERBACK: 15th September (£1 99)



commission, DELTA AND THE BANNERMEN, to be followed by THE WAR MACHINES.

As you can see the latest covers all feature the new logo, as stipulated by the BBC. Because Oliver Elmes design is a computer-generated image, to achieve the same effect as appears on television the logo is a photographic image and so can't easily be overlaid on to artwork. To overcome this problem it is laid against a solid black background which cuts into the top 30% of the cover - a space traditionally occupied by artwork. This new format has already met with disquiet from many Target fans claiming the new design is "messy" and "off-putting".

I was offered the job of producing DOCTOR WHO in 1979'

GEORGE GALLACCIO INTERVIEWED AT THE BBC'S THRESHOLD HOUSE ON FEBRUARY 1st ...

HOW DID YOU COME TO WORK FOR THE BBC ?

Oh God, that's over 20 years ago ! I came to the BBC from the theatre and started as an Assistant Floor Manager which I did for quite a while. I think I actually worked on some of the early DOCTOR WHOs but I can't remember which ones. I did work for a time on The Forsythe Saga which became very popular and a lot of the period stuff like the Dickens Sunday Classics (Copperfield, Nicholas Nickleby, etc.).

WAS DOCTOR WHO ANY MORE DIFFICULT TO DO THAN OTHER PROGRAMMES YOU WERE WORKING ON AT THAT TIME ?

It was quite different, suddenly having to deal with all the technical effects was very difficult and in those days it wasn't half as sophisticated as it is today. There just wasn't the money. It was a much lower budget than they have today and less film - it was mostly done in the studio with only 2 or 3 work location work which tended to be down a quarry somewhere. It was much more interesting working as Production Unit Manager with Barry Letts and setting the whole thing up was quite exciting.

YOU WERE FIRST CREDITED AS A PRODUCTION ASSISTANT FOR THE '73 STORY 'PLANET OF THE DALEKS'. WERE YOU AWARE OF THE TEAM SPIRIT OF THOSE DAYS ?

Barry was a very good producer. He tended to create a family atmosphere around him. People who work on his shows tend to get used again and again. Jon - Mr.Pertwee - was getting towards the end of his reign and he could be difficult if he wanted to, but on the whole he tended to make people welcome. He would get rather concerned about getting himself dirty and there were always a lot of mirrors on hand in case he was not looking his best.

WERE YOU AWARE THE WHOLE TEAM WAS THINKING OF LEAVING ?

Jon Pertwee was the first to announce his wanting to leave and Barry stayed long enough to supervise the change over and then went on his way.

The series was going through various changes at that stage which culminated in the casting of Tom Baker, and we were trying to do a lot of location work on O.B. instead of film because that was the beginning of the light weight camera. ROBOT, Tom's first one, had a huge amount of time on O.B.. The next one - THE SONTARAN EXPERIMENT - however, was the very first time the team had gone completely on O.B.. Barry was very keen to go on O.B. as a means and he had the idea of going to Dartmoor to do the whole thing. It was also the one where Tom ended up in hospital with a broken collar bone and we had to use doubles for quite a bit of that; Terry Walsh probably ended up playing him. I drove frantically to get Tom to hospital that day and he had to stay in for a couple of days and when he came back he couldn't do any of the jumping around.

BY THIS TIME YOU WERE A PERMANENT MEMBER OF THE PRODUCTION TEAM AS THE POST OF PRODUCTION UNIT MANAGER HAD JUST BEEN CREATED. BASICALLY WHAT DID THE JOB ENTAIL ?

It's now known as Production Associate, and he tries to control the logistics of making a programme; arranging the scheduling and taking care of the finances, that sort of thing.

DO YOU REMEMBER THE CASTING OF TOM BAKER ?

It took quite a while to cast Tom. We interviewed lots of actors for it; Richard Hearne and Geoffrey Crowther were among those we saw. There were quite a few before we ended up with Tom. Barry's idea was to get someone much more eccentric than Jon. The idea of the scarves and things was all Tom's.

WHAT CAN YOU RECALL FROM HIS FIRST SEASON ?

I think you remember more about it than me. I remember the Wookey Hole one. Ryis Karel took over as Assistant Floor

Manager on that one because the girl who started it had a complete breakdown because she couldn't cope with going down Wookey Hole. There were a lot of people on that shoot who found Wookey Hole very spooky. Michael Briant told me that he went down there on his own for a personal wreckee and found it very scary and said he would never go down on his own again. He said he got a feeling of something very eerie down there. We had to drive the girl back to London and ended up driving through the night to get Ryis Karel down there for the O.B. the next day. It was terribly difficult because the communications wouldn't work properly (walkie talkies and things) so it was not very comfortable working under those conditions.

HOW DID YOU FIND WORKING WITH TOM BAKER AT THIS POINT ?

I liked working with Tom, I got to know him very well. I know he got difficult later on and a lot of people hated working with him. I haven't seen him for ages, although I saw him briefly a year ago in a pub propping up the bar ! He was very much a nomad himself when he was doing WHO. He didn't really have anywhere permanent to live so he used to camp on people's floors and he'd arrive at the rehearsal room looking as if he'd slept on a park bench.

Of all the various DOCTOR WHOs I think Tom took it more seriously than any of them. He took on a tremendous amount of work outside the programme for charities; he'd do signing sessions and personal appearances all the time.

WAS THERE ANY DIFFERENCE WORKING WITH PERTWEE AS OPPOSED TO TOM BAKER ?

Oh yes. With Tom you were working with an actor but with Jon Pertwee you weren't; you were working with a personality and the script wasn't that important to him. Tom on the other hand was very concerned about the overall quality of the programme itself. I think he got more difficult later on because the scripts got weaker and he wanted them to get better which caused a lot of friction.

AND WHAT OF PHILIP HINCHCLIFFE ?

Philip was working for the BBC only a short time and as a new boy back in '74 we were told he was to be looked after.

DO YOU HAVE ANY MEMORIES OF 'GENESIS OF THE DALEKS' ?

I do remember that one, yes. Davros was a very effective character, but I find it very interesting that people do still like the Daleks. When you are actually working with them they don't seem in the least bit frightening. In rehearsal they take the tops off and so you have the little wooden skirts with men paddling around in them. In PLANET OF THE DALEKS we had the most awful time pulling the Daleks in and out of the water in a limestone quarry. I've never understood why they took off. I can see why Davros was so frightening; he was semi-human, half machine and seemed more genuinely evil.

YOU THEN WORKED ON 'TERROR OF THE ZYGONS', RETURNING ONLY TO DO 'THE SEEDS OF DOOM'.

I don't remember TERROR OF THE ZYGONS very well except trying to find a lake to double as Loch Ness. I don't remember "coming back" to do THE SEEDS OF DOOM - I thought it was attached to the first (12th) Season ?

IN TERMS OF YOUR ENTIRE CAREER, WAS 'DOCTOR WHO' SPECIAL TO YOU OR JUST ANOTHER JOB ?

I enjoyed doing it very much which is why I stayed two or three years on it. One was given a choice and I chose DOCTOR WHO. I particularly enjoyed working with Barry Letts, I learnt a lot from him. He's very good at handling people and it wasn't just another programme to him. Sometimes you would think producers had been given DOCTOR WHO and they were not particularly bothered about it. But I left because I wanted a new challenge because in a way it becomes too easy.

AND WHERE DID YOU GO ?

I worked with Barry on the Sunday Classics, then produced a

6-part Robin Hood for the Sunday spot around that time which was the first thing I produced. After that I was attached to the serial Angels with Julia Smith and then I was sent up to Scotland to produce a series called The Omega Factor, a science fiction-based series which did quite well. It had super-natural under tones.

MORE RECENTLY YOU HAVE BEEN PRODUCING 'MISS MARPLE' AND 'BERGERAC', TWO ENORMOUSLY POPULAR SERIES.

Bergerac is great fun to do. I only took it over last year so the series going out at the moment is mine. I'm setting up next year's at the moment which will go out in the spring of 1989. Last year's was supposed to be the last series but it is getting such huge viewing figures so John Nettles was persuaded to stay on. But the next one is supposed to be the last definitely.

HAVE YOU WATCHED 'DOCTOR WHO' SINCE YOU LEFT ?

Yes, not regularly though. They kept changing the transmission days and it got very confusing.

A GENTLEMAN CALLED JOHN NATHAN-TURNER IS PRODUCING IT NOW.

Yes, I know John very well. We shared an office together for some time.

THE VIEWING FIGURES HAVE DROPPED QUITE DRAMATICALLY.

Well, I wouldn't be very happy if I was scheduled to go out against Coronation Street. I don't quite know what John's philosophy is with the programme...it could have been me !! I was offered the job of producing DOCTOR WHO in 1979 and I said no.

WHY ?

I just felt as though I could not bring anything new to the programme at that time. I don't know if I'd feel the same now.

DO YOU REALISE YOU HAVE TURNED DOWN PAID TRIPS ALL AROUND THE WORLD ?

At that time DOCTOR WHO just didn't have the sort of international success it enjoys now. John I saw a couple of weeks ago and he said he was off to America. Louise Jameson, who is now in Bergerac, popped off to America for a convention during the last series. It is funny that the character of Leela is still remembered after all this time.

It was always an honour to work on the programme because it's such a big part of the BBC's history, one of their biggest success stories. I remember watching it with Pat Troughton when I was younger and I think he was the best Doctor of all. The appeal of the programme then was that it was not a flashy, glossy programme. It was low budget, with good actors and nice scripts rather than effects and the show-biz bit that a lot of the ones now have got. If you're going to compete on that level you've got to have a hell of a lot of money.

DO YOU THINK WITH THE LOW VIEWING FIGURES THE BBC WILL DUMP THE SERIES FOR GOOD ?

As far as I know they're planning another series, which is all I know. As I say I saw John before he went to Hawaii for his break before he commences on the new series.

Don't you think it is all just for publicity purposes though ? It's like EastEnders. There are more rumours that are not true coming out of the EastEnders office than anything. I think it's all just publicity hype.

WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE PLANS ?

Well, I'm working on what is supposed to be the last series of Bergerac. I don't know after that...

IF I SAID TO YOU JOHN NATHAN-TURNER IS LEAVING DOCTOR WHO, WILL YOU COME AND PRODUCE THE SERIES, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY ?

No, John would kill me !!!

GEORGE GALLACCIO, THANK YOU.

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED AND TRANSCRIBED BY ROBERT COPE

LAST ISSUE WE FEATURED THE FIRST PART OF 'INTERVIEW HIGHLIGHTS' WHICH LISTED THE MOST MEMORABLE QUOTES FROM THE MANY INTERVIEWS D.W.B. HAS CONDUCTED OVER 50 ISSUES. WE HAVE DECIDED TO CONCLUDE THIS FLASHBACK ARTICLE UP TO THE END OF THE 1986 VOLUME (D.W.B.#41/42) SINCE LAST YEAR'S INTERVIEWS (WITH KATY MANNING, KEVIN MANSER, ROBERT JEWELL, THOSE THAT APPEARED IN THE ROGER DELGADO TRIBUTE, ANDREW MORGAN, COLIN BAKER AND SYLVESTER MCCOY) WILL STILL BE FRESH IN MOST PEOPLES' MINDS

SYDNEY NEWMAN [D.W.B.#41-42, 1986 Winter Special]

"DOCTOR WHO is just about the least important thing I've ever done in my life! . . . I got offered a job by the Walt Disney studios as an animator after taking an exhaustive test. They'd just finished Snow White - which was a fantastic success - and they were working on Bambi. . . They do say I have pretty pungent speech! . . . When I got to the BBC there was a drop in ratings on Saturday afternoons between the top-rated sports coverage and Juke Box Jury and I was asked could we do another kind of children's drama which would sustain the ratings because we had to start building towards Saturday evenings. I don't know what - it might have been H.G.wells - but I thought of a time/space machine and I honestly can't really describe how I thought of it but I did. The cute thing about it was the fact that the spaceship was to be a very common place object which could be seen by anybody. It could have been an old car or anything, but it turned out to be a police telephone box. All this got put down in a memorandum which is probably buried in the archives somewhere. . . During the whole of the first year or two - when I had any say over the series - the Earth companions always wanted to get back to Earth, but this old fart wanted to get back to his home, but he didn't know how to use this blasted machine and so they ended up either in outer space or backward in history or forward in history. And that was my idea. . . I think that the best thing I ever did on that was, of course, to find Verity Lambert who had been a production assistant, one of 8 or 9 I had at ABC Television. . . I remembered Verity as being bright and, to use the phrase, full of piss and vinegar ! She was gutsy and she used to fight and argue with me, even though she was not at a very high level as a production assistant. . . Verity cocked it up by allowing (Susan) to become his granddaughter - it was so stupid. . . Just stupidity to imagine a character like DOCTOR WHO being randy as well - in a children's series to boot ! They pulled that thing on me and I was livid with anger. . . The other thing I definitely laid down the law about - and it is in my memo - that there should be NO bug-eyed monsters. I said that's cheap science fiction, and then of course she comes up with the Daleks, and I guess you know the story of how angry I was with her. I remember seeing the show on Saturday afternoon and I phoned her up immediately and I said 'I WANT TO SEE YOU IN MY OFFICE ON MONDAY MORNING!'. . . I really ripped into her and I said 'You've betrayed the whole concept - there was to be no damned bug-eyed monsters - and it's cheap, Verity, it's cheap science fiction!'. She was protesting at the top of her voice. . . I loved Bill Hartnell, although frankly (I don't wish to speak ill of the dead, but) I did prefer Patrick Troughton. . . Did I tell you about the popular board game Trivial Pursuit ? One of the questions asks 'Who created DOCTOR WHO', and gives the answer as 'Terry Nation'. I'm considering suing them, and as a result of that I've written to the BBC and I've asked them to give me a credit 'DOCTOR WHO devised by Sydney Newman' from now on. . . I don't feel very able to comment, not having seen much of it in the last 10-12 years. Mind you, I did see some of them because they were being run in Canada and I frankly wasn't impressed. . . Although I'm not making fun of Innes Lloyd, I noticed in your interview it was 'I said to Sydney' and 'I said to Sydney'. Well, that's a bit of a joke. It's like 'I said to God' or 'I said to the President'. . . I think (Raymond) Cusick has been very much under-published. A sheer genius ! The conception was good, but the execution was spectacular. And of course Verity, David Whitaker and Terry Nation made the conflict between the creatures and Earthlings marvellous, but the designer is the genius there. . . Producers should never get stale and tired, because don't forget a producer gets regenerated with every new project he does. . . I was invited to go to some convention in Chicago. I said don't be silly, and turned it down ! . . I'll embarrass you because I don't like the series today at all. . . I have some ideas for changing DOCTOR WHO which I'm not going to tell you about. I'll tell Michael Grade. . . I don't want to say anything that looks like I want a job, but I wouldn't mind fooling around with the series a bit, yes. I've got a very cute idea for replacing the TARDIS. . . I've only met (Michael Grade) once and then he just salivated all over me - 'SYDNEY NEWMAN, GOD!!'. I guess he was in knee pants when DOCTOR WHO started."

Though starting off by seeming to make fun of those who criticise the programme's current standards, Mr. Spencer backs up those criticisms admitting that he himself has noticed the "panto antics", that the current Doctor "could possibly do with a little less whimsy and a shade more authority", "that some of the jokes are a bit self-conscious and "the thrill count is lower than it used to be".

Since he writes of the series with such obvious knowledge and affection and ends with a wish that DOCTOR WHO may make future returns to our screens, is it possible that in drawing a distinction between himself and those of who are "terminally hooked" he is merely deluding himself ...?

OPINIONATED

S. PICKETT, Bedford MA, U.S.A.

The article by Charles Spencer was interesting. I do not think he spent much (if any) time researching his information. He states that he watched two episodes from Season 24 and "only a couple" of the episodes with Colin Baker. How he can form an opinion of DOCTOR WHO on two episodes from Season 24 is beyond me. I have seen all of Colin's stories and I still have not formed a definitive opinion of them. I guess being a television critic for the newspaper allows you to form opinions about every show you watch, even if you know nothing about it! Of course, being a television critic can also cause permanent brain damage!

THE SETS HAVE BECOME THE STARS

KATHY STARNES, Oak Harbor WA, U.S.A.

Reading the debate sparked by JN-T of how memory and the passage of time affects one's reception of DOCTOR WHO, I felt I should add one more aspect of the subject of perception. I am now 40 years old and I began watching DOCTOR WHO a mere six years ago. My daughter was 5 at the time and my husband was 35. Here in the U.S.A. we've been able to watch every available episode of DOCTOR WHO from AN UNEARTHLY CHILD to the TRIAL season, and in order too! The consensus of opinion is that Tom Baker and William Hartnell are the best Doctors, and that they made the best of their episodes no matter how good or mundane the scripts. But even more significantly, we have all found that with only a few exceptions, the series has degenerated significantly since JN-T's third season. We did not particularly enjoy even these first three of JN-T's, but found them depressing and somehow fatalistic. After that, it was downhill in a hurry. If a storyline showed promise, something inevitably threw it off track. We continued watching with a morbid curiosity as to how bad things would get. The programme really does need a breath of fresh air, and it has nothing to do with the actors but with the production. Tacky sets from the old episodes were relegated to the background where they belonged by the conviction and ability of the actors. Under JN-T, the sets became the stars and the Doctor has faded into the background. He has gone from a mysterious, enigmatic, wise 'old' time traveller to a prop with limited imagination and virtually no insight. In fact, one would hardly miss him if he were absent - a far cry from the stories where one eagerly awaited the scenes that included William Hartnell or Tom Baker and felt tempted to fast-forward the rest of the scenes on the VCR. My children (we've since added a son who is now 4½ and wild about Hartnell and Tom Baker) will watch several episodes a day on the VCR, and of our entire collection of DOCTOR WHO, they will view Tom Baker's stories over and over again, with a few of Hartnell's classics included to spice things up.

So, there you have it. No lengthy memory problems; no clouding of perception by the growing process; no "overgrown school" kids where my husband and I are concerned or where my children are concerned since they still are schoolkids. We have viewed all the complete episodes from start to Colin Baker's finish, and our opinion concurs with that of Levy and Levine

- namely that JN-T has been a terrible detriment to DOCTOR WHO and that a new producer is desperately needed to save the show. No hysteria; no axe-grinding; just the sad, simple truth.

RIGHT TO REPLY

MARIA JAMES, Uxbridge, MIDDLESEX

Thank you for printing my letter (D.W.B.#51), but I feel I must explain a few things. Firstly, you called me "The pro-JN-T faction". This was not the subject of my letter. I did not and have not stated my views on that argument, as I feel they are irrelevant to the subject matter of the letter, which you made no comment on. My stance is not so much pro-JN-T as anti-Operation WHO.

Secondly, why am I "still obviously reading D.W.B."? Well, actually I only bought #50 because I happened to see it in a shop. A friend showed me the letter in 51.

Thirdly you say I have done pro-JN-T fans a disservice with my "unnecessarily rude tone and ill-considered facts". Unlike some people I do not claim to represent anybody else. I stated my opinions as straightforwardly and concisely as I could. I do not intend to beat-about-the-bush. And calling me rude is something of an irony coming from someone who has insulted many people in D.W.B..

You seem to have missed the main point of my letter by turning it into one half of a pro/anti JN-T argument. My point is this: I DISAGREE WITH OPERATION WHO IN PRINCIPLE.

NOT THE JOB OF FANS

CHAS VINCE, Poole, DORSET

Where did Ms. James state she was pro-JN-T? I got the impression that she was merely anti-Operation WHO. I don't like the way DOCTOR WHO is currently produced but agree with the spirit of Ms. James' letter. It is not the job of the fans to dictate to TV companies whom they should employ.

EDITOR: We apologise to Ms. James for misinterpreting the gist of her letter, due to the issue being put together under extreme pressures.

OPERATION WHO HYPERBOLE

S. LANCASTER, Stoke-on-Trent, STAFFS

When I read Ian Levine's article in D.W.B.#49 I was appalled. Those telling words "in my opinion" were swamped by endless hyperbole and emotive propaganda. Opinions were stated as if they were facts. Incidents from Season 24 were deliberately misinterpreted to back up what might loosely be described as an argument against JN-T. The only thing it lacked was a rallying "Heil" at the end. In some ways I wish that I could have been as impartial as The Daily Telegraph critic and found it merely "richly comic". Instead I found it disturbing and pathetic.

I noted the phrase "campaign through the nation's press" but did not realise the implications. However, when I received D.W.B.#50 and had found a magnifying glass to read the letter already sent out to the newspapers "on behalf of all the show's fans" I understood where all the strange items appearing in the press had been coming from.

I dread to think what the next phase of your Operation WHO campaign might be (no doubt you will inform your readers after it has akin plae), but you are deluding yourself if you still think that it is doing any good for DOCTOR WHO. What it does seem to have done (according to letters published in D.W.B.) is helped at least one person to "see the light", and discouraged one Time Meddler of Vancouver from wanting to see any of Season 24. So apart from chasing away some of the audience and creating a hostile atmosphere between fans and programme makers, what other tangible effects has it had?

I buy and read D.W.B., but I am totally opposed to Operation WHO, with its merciless propaganda and aura of megalomania.

Season 24 was not perfect, and neither were the

other 23, although we all have our own personal favourites. But in my opinion it was an inventive and encouraging departure from the tacky and predictable format the programme had degenerated into over the preceding 5 years. I found Season 24 to be imaginative, entertaining and (I know that this next bit will give some of you an apoplectic fit but...) well produced. It was an unprecedented improvement after the nadir of the TOATL fiasco. Instead of condemning JN-T and the rest of the production team (whose contributions I cannot dismiss so easily as you seem to), I think they should be commended for at last managing to be innovative as well as regaining some of the old magic.

FREE SPEECH

NIGEL GRIFFITHS, Dyfed, WALES

I've disagreed with a lot of things you've printed in D.W.B. over the last couple of years, especially concerning the current shape of the show which I like, and recently I've found the way the national press has taken to citing yourself and Ian Levine as the voices of Fandom and naming D.W.B. on a couple of occasions as the D.W.A.S. newsletter, annoying. I know this is mostly down to sensation-seeking tabloid writers and not yourself as D.W.B. has always been fair in its opinions, but what I'd like to say is that I wholeheartedly agree with your refusal to apologise to JN-T over Ian Levine's article - free speech is the entitlement of everyone in this country and you cannot allow yourself to be censored by the B.B.C. or its solicitors. I hasten to add that I am not a supporter of JN-T - I wish he'd gone with Davison; I just think the McCoy/Cartmel pairing is good news for DOCTOR WHO.

"NEWSPAPER REPORTS PROMPTED BBC ACTION"

TIM MUNRO, Huddersfield, WEST YORKS

I hope the shenanigans with the Beeb have gone away. I'm sure JN-T would never dare to sue - he'd be laughed out of court (Saward as first defense witness, perhaps?). The letter from the B.B.C.'s Legal Department seems to confirm this: they're not bothered when the allegations and accusations are just running to and fro within Fandom, but when they reach the pages of the national newspapers - where (God forbid!) ordinary members of the public can read them - the BBC try to stamp their foot down. For this reason I believe that the BBC response was initially prompted not by D.W.B.#49, but the newspaper reports that concentrated upon it.

REALISTIC OFFERS ARE INVITED ON THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

DOCTOR WHO Denys Fisher board game (1975), complete, very good condition

ANNUALS: First Hartnell (1964), first Dalek book (1964) and first two Troughtons (all excellent condition)

A complete mint set of Marvel Weeklies (#1-43). (OFFERS C/O THE DWB ADDRESS)



DALEK DATA:

BUILT: 1979

COLOUR: Silver & blue

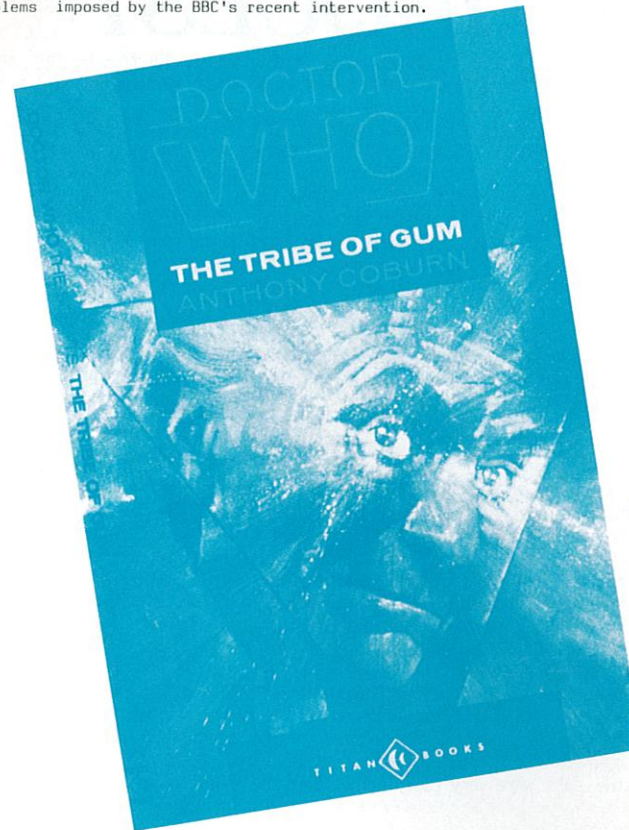
APPEARANCES: with Tom Baker

Blue Peter

SELLING PRICE: realistic offers considered

CONTACT *Richard* ON: 01 740 0384

Jeremy Bentham takes a look at Titan's new script book series and examines the problems imposed by the BBC's recent intervention.



THE FIRST THING that strikes me on reading this visually quite impressive pilot release is that it is not what it purports to be.

Despite the series title, THE TRIBE OF GUM is not the script of that pioneering first DOCTOR WHO serial, but a transcript of what was seen on air. Does this make any difference?

Probably not to the vast majority of fans who will snap up this title, eager for an imprinted version of Anthony Coburn's teleplay, freed from the narrative liberties taken by Terrance Dicks in the Target novelisation. But my trouble is an incurable thirst for knowledge and background information about the series which has meant so much to me, both as an impressionable youngster, and as an adult who has carved something of a side career researching into the programme's rich history.

Consequently, the question which sprang immediately to my mind as a purist was, why didn't the publishers do the original script, instead of transcribing a teleplay? After all, AN UNEARTHLY CHILD / THE TRIBE OF GUM is one of the more widely seen DOCTOR WHO TV serials in recent years, having been repeated in Britain and syndicated nationally throughout the U.S. So why read the book if you've just watched the video?

Answering these points, series editor John McElroy pointed out his original intention had been to transcribe just the dialogue, interjecting only minimal stage directions where necessary. Quickly he ruled this out as impractical, realising certain scripts - especially those with lengthy scenes of people running down corridors - would make for very thin chapters, sparsely furnished with uncorrelated cries of, "Doctor?", "This way", "Run", "Exterminate..." etc. Ergo, there had to be passages of description to make the whole thing readable.

But the point about why the book could not have contained say, scenes in the script that were cut from production, or sequences that were different to what was recorded on the day, opened the still-sore wound resulting from THE TRIBE OF GUM not being entirely what John had envisaged, and being delayed for so many months in consequence.

One of the main reasons he had chosen this story for publication was that it fitted his selection criteria of scripts that either had not been done as Target books, or which had on-screen differences to the novelisations. In this respect, adapting the first story gave the ideal opportunity to present the first TV-seen episode adjacent to the script / teleplay for the un-screened pilot.

However, having finished (he thought) the book, complete with Jan Vincent-Rudzki's extensive article detailing the history and production of both episodes, John was understandably not pleased to learn of a major objection to the book by current DOCTOR WHO producer John Nathan-Turner.

Exercising his position as "Guardian of the BBC's interest in DOCTOR WHO", Nathan-Turner objected to the inclusion of the pilot on grounds that (a) it was unscreened, and so was not strictly a part of the DOCTOR WHO mythos, and (b) it was deliberately never screened because it was both clumsily acted and poorly directed, thus a serious analysis of its faults would be unnecessarily detrimental to the BBC's image as professional programme makers.

Reluctantly John McElroy had to accede to these criticisms. The manuscripts were recalled and re-jigged to cut the script of the pilot and edit out any references to the line fluffs, crashing camera pedestals and TARDIS doors that refused to shut properly which were so much a part of the pilot's admittedly less-than-perfect production values.

These dictates were also instrumental in the decision to go for what was shown on air rather than risk incurring further wrath (and expensive publishing hold-ups) writing up other script sections which might have been cut for similarly contentious reasons.

To my mind this is a sad loss to the book series achieving its best potential, but not one for which blame should be levelled at either the editor or the publishers. And it means that future adaptations can sometimes contain more than what was in the writer's original script. For example, a single paragraph reference to a warehouse fight in THE AMBASSADORS OF DEATH part one can provide several pages of reading if the visual teleplay is adapted for the script book.

For me then, the best part of THE TRIBE OF GUM Script Book remains, despite the edits, Jan's excellent 11 page summary of the programme's origin and production. Indeed it would be my personal wish to see this section expanded in future volumes, perhaps along the lines of Geoffrey Perkin's compilation of The Hitch Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy radio scripts, which contain sleeve notes at the end of each chapter instead of all crammed at the beginning.

This would surely enable - 'royal' bans notwithstanding - more expanded sections of technical notes that might otherwise seem unwieldy to read all in one batch at the front of the book. Today's generation of SF book buyers, themselves products of the computer age, exhibit a fascination towards "How it was Done" publications, as sales from Cinefax to The Making of Star Trek bear witness. Would people be interested in footnotes telling them that the paleolithic landscape at the end of episode one was a tabletop model, hence the need for a cutaway shot to Kal (not Za as the book's credits suggest) in part two? Hands up those who say yes...

If this all sounds like griping, then it is not intentional. The prospect of an expanding series of DOCTOR WHO Script Books is a very sound one, and one that deserves to be as rich a source of information as possible, both for the purists such as myself and for more non-committed bookbuyers tempted into purchase by the hope of finally learning what all the fuss has been about with DOCTOR WHO over the last twenty-five years. A fond hope for a fond future - JEREMY BENTHAM.

THE WIRRN

BE AFRAID... BE VERY AFRAID



THE ARK IN SPACE is now available from the CMS distribution address. Send £1.50 to: Jeremy Bentham, 13 Northfield Road, BOREHAMWOOD WD7 4AL.

MISSION

SEASON 24 ~ AN INQUEST

IT SEEMS that - due to a rather surprisingly balanced reaction - the recent season of DOCTOR WHO was one you either loved or loathed. And it doesn't really take much to realise that those who liked it were the younger and newer generation of fans; and those who hated it being the older fans who have both watched and admired the show since its early years.

Well, without trying to sound awkward or snobbish in anyway, I have to say that in my case I found it all rather mediocre, with some parts reaching thankful doubleplus goods, but even more parts scoring cringeworthy double-plusbads. Sadly, the good parts were both few and far between, which basically explains why the season has been considered by the older fans as an exceedingly inferior Log of the Doctor's adventures.

However, despite what these pedantic followers say about Season 24, I still can't bring myself to labelling it as "awful", especially when I recall the cosmic-ennui of the previous season. I mean, at least Season 24 maintained my viewing during the full 14 weeks, whereas the sadly dire TRIAL season didn't. And it baffles me how people can call Season 24 "the worst ever" when it was easily much better than its yawmworthy predecessor. Surely someone out there must agree with me, or have I just got bad taste?

Anyway, I know that by now most of you are probably bored to anti-matter with the scores of reviews and retrospectives on the recent WHO season, so I'll try my best to be both original and provocative in this "inquest" into what went wrong and what (if anything) went right with the infamous Season 24...

Well firstly, it is in true DOCTOR WHO tradition that when a new regeneration is brought into the series a new era has begun, and therefore both a new approach and a (wait for it) new look are in call for. This I totally agree with due to the inevitable fact that if you don't change, whether it be in music, writing or in the production of a show like WHO, then there's no real point in going on, is there? However, in the case of Season 24, I find that

think about both of these yarns, but I personally thought that the basic concepts of each of the stories were exceedingly imaginative. It's just the way in which they were produced that induced them to both come over as unbelievable pantomime pap. And I'm not talking about such things as acting, special effects or scenery either, whether they be good or bad. I'm simply referring to how the stories were not developed in the right way, and perhaps (in the case of TIME AND THE RANI) more time should have been spent on developing the story rather than wasting valuable budget money on upgrading the special effects. Surely a good story is far more important than convincing effects? I mean, it never really seemed to bother us before, during the days of dodgy CSO and cardboard scenery - but excellent plots. Or did it ...?

Also, in order to make these two stories a bit more exciting, they should have both been condensed down in some way or another into two or three-part stories, and then there probably wouldn't have been any need for the rather embarrassing scenes that seemed to be there just to fill space rather than contribute any vital purpose to the story.

By the time DELTA AND THE BANNERMEN came on the air things were, in a way, beginning to look up. The acting, the script, the special effects and even the plot itself were all vastly improved in this story, making it, in my view, the most interesting of the batch. Another notable point about BANNERMEN was the fact that the season's possible Jinx, Bonnie Langford, seemed to be less irritating and much more laid-back in comparison to her debatable acting and ear-piercing squawking of the previous two stories. This, for me, made DOCTOR WHO worth looking forward to again.

Now, even though the final story DRAGONFIRE was, in a way, fairly interesting, it also seemed rather disappointing due to the commonly known fact that it was (apparently) the Doctor's 150th adventure. The story was rather complex (too complex in fact if it was supposed to attract younger viewers), the sets were very tacky (especially the underground ice passages - polysty-

rene snow or what ??), and the 'acting' of Bonnie Langford and Sophie Aldred was awkward to say the least. The opening episode was most confusing and, in places, just plain daft. Excusing the pun, take the cliffhanger for example. I'm sure there can't have been anyone watching who wasn't utterly baffled by the Doctor climbing over a railing for no apparent reason and then wondering why he was hanging there grabbing tightly with sliding fingers onto his trusty broly only inches away from a rather undramatic death. Confused? I definitely was. And then, amidst the chaotic going ons of the remaining parts of the story, there was Estella. Now what the hell has a little space-girl with a teddy bear got to do with the price of Auton-mannequins? I don't know about you but I was bewildered in a rather paranoid sort of way.

And finally, to top it all, during the headlong rush towards the end of a sadly bizarre anniversary story, there comes a totally unexpected scene where Kane's face horrifically melts when exposed to a lethal burst of scorching sunlight. And as well as looking out of place in a season of timid tackiness, this peculiarly inserted scene didn't help much by scaring JN-T's new-found kiddie viewers to near-death!

Basically DRAGONFIRE, like the whole season in fact, was weird, daft, strangely interesting, tacky and sad. Sad because DOCTOR WHO used to be so good. The only reason Season 24 has managed to attract a lot of younger viewers (according to JN-T), while at the same time losing a lot of its traditional family audience according to BARB, is that they're simply too young to remember when the series was a classic in SF drama and not the intergalactic panto that it has gradually become under the auspices of JN-T. I just hope for DOCTOR WHO's silver Jubilee year he'll come up with something a bit more worthwhile than what he's done in recent years, although I somehow rather doubt it.

Please, JN-T, prove me wrong! - ASH

(DOCTOR WHO AND THE STRANGE SNACK by Stephen Lee & Linda Woolford)

NAME
AGE (Years) (Months)
DO YOU BUY D.W.B.: Every month[], Most months[], Occasionally[] ?
EXCLUDING THE SPECIALS, WHICH WAS YOUR FAVOURITE ISSUE OF D.W.B. DURING 1987: #42(May)[], #44(June)[], #45(July)[], #47(September)[], #47(October)[], #49(November)[] ?

WHY ?
WHICH OF THE 1987 SPECIALS DID YOU PREFER: Summer[], Winter[]

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE SPECIALIST D.W.B. PUBLICATIONS, SUCH AS THE ROGER DELGADO TRIBUTE, RELEASED AS SPECIALS IN THE FUTURE: Yes[], No[], Don't know[] ?

DID YOU ENJOY D.W.B.'s 'NOSTALGIA ORIENTATION' DURING 1987: Yes[], No[], Indifferent[], Other

DO YOU FEEL WE WERE EVENTUALLY JUSTIFIED IN THIS CHANGE IN LIGHT OF THE SUBSEQUENT SEASON 24 WHICH WE STATED AS THE REASON FOR THIS CHANGE: Yes[], No[], Don't care[] ?

WHICH FOUR OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE OF IN 1988: News[], Letters[], Season Reviews[], Artwork/posters[], Topical articles[], Reviews(books and theatre)[], Comic strip[], Convention info/Panopticon review[], Video/book covers[], Whochat(comment column)[], Interview[], Special offers[], Behind the '60s scene/photos[] ?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE ANY OF THE ABOVE DROPPED, IF SO PLEASE STATE:

HAVE YOU ANY IDEAS FOR NEW FEATURES, IF SO PLEASE STATE:

DO YOU LIKE OUR NEW LOGO AND INTERIOR DESIGN: Yes[], No[], Not bothered[] ?

IF NOT, WHY ?

IN YOUR OPINION IS D.W.B.: Too expensive[], Priced about right[], Value for money[] ?

DO YOU THINK D.W.B. HAS BEEN TOO OUTSPOKEN OVER THE PAST YEAR: Yes[], No[], Don't know[] ?

'OPERATION WHO'

DO YOU THINK D.W.B. WAS MORALLY RIGHT TO LAUNCH 'OPERATION WHO': Yes[], No[], Don't know[], Other

IF YES, WHAT ARE YOUR FEELINGS ON THE WAY WE PLANNED OUR STRATEGY: Spot on[], Sufficient[], OK[], Disappointing[], Appalling[], Other

WHY:

IN LIGHT OF RECENT NEWS, DO YOU FEEL IT MADE AN IMPACT ON THE BBC: Yes[], No[], Don't know[], Other

ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

50 ISSUES OF D.W.B.

WHICH ISSUE OF D.W.B. DID YOU FIRST BUY:

DO YOU ENJOY D.W.B. MORE NOW THAN WHEN YOU FIRST BECAME A REGULAR READER Yes[], No[], The same[] ?

WHY:

WHICH WAS YOUR FAVOURITE OVERALL ISSUE: WORST ISSUE:

WHICH WAS YOUR FAVOURITE INTERVIEW:

IN ONE SENTENCE, WHY DO YOU BUY D.W.B.:

IF D.W.B. WAS TO FOLD, WHAT AFFECT WOULD IT HAVE UPON YOUR LIFE AS A 'DOCTOR WHO' FAN:

SEASON 24

HOW WOULD YOU RATE SEASON 24: A classic[], Very good[], Average[], Poor[], Abysmal[], Other

HOW DO YOU RATE SYLVESTER MCCOY'S PORTRAYAL OF THE SEVENTH DOCTOR: Brilliant[], Very good[], Average[], Poor[], Abysmal[], Other

CONSIDERING THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING HIS APPOINTMENT, WAS HE AN IMPROVEMENT ON COLIN BAKER'S INTERPRETATION OF THE DOCTOR: Yes[], No[], About the same[], Other

IN YOUR OPINION, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WORDS BEST DESCRIBE SEASON 24: Dramatic[], Childish[], Suspenseful[], Shoddy[], Gothic[], Pantomimesque[], Action[], Gaudy[], Gripping[], Banal[], Humorous[], Absurd[], Enthralling[], Whacky[], Mysterious[], Variety[], Entertaining[], Lighthearted[], Exciting[], Atmospheric[], Other

THE NEW PRODUCER...

WHAT ARE YOUR FEELINGS ON JOHN NATHAN-TURNER LEAVING 'DOCTOR WHO': Pleased[], Relieved[], Don't care[], Sorry[], He still has a lot to offer the series[], Other

(IF EITHER OF THE FIRST TWO CHOICES), DO YOU THINK THE SHOW'S FORMER EXCELLENT REPUTATION CAN STILL BE RESTORED IN THE EYES OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC WITH A NEW PRODUCER: Yes[], No[], Don't know[], Other

IF SO, WHO DO YOU THINK COULD DO THE JOB

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE JOHN NATHAN-TURNER'S PRODUCERSHIP OF 'DOCTOR WHO': Has introduced the greatest advancements in WHO mythology[], A good job done and as valid as any of his predecessors[], Good to start with but stayed too long[], Has ruined the series beyond repair and should never have been appointed[], Other

ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

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